

BULLYING PREVENTION MONTH

AT WAIMEA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Every week this month, we will be sending home a page with more information about bullying. Please take the time to read these papers, and discuss this important topic with your child.

WOULDN'T MY CHILD TELL ME ABOUT BEING BULLIED?

"Not necessarily. Children may not tell adults—even their parents—about being bullied at school. Studies show that children don't tell because they believe adults won't stop the bullying. Children may also think that they should be able to solve their own problems. Or they may not even recognize that they are being bullied. Other children are afraid. They think that telling an adult will result in worse treatment from the child bullying them.

Any of the following signs could indicate a child is being bullied:

● Fear of riding the school bus	● Frequently "lost" lunch money	● Sleeplessness or nightmares
● Cuts or bruises	● Frequent requests to stay home from school	● Depression, or lack of enthusiasm for hobbies or friends
● Damaged clothing or belongings	● Frequent unexplained minor illnesses	● Declining school performance

COULD MY CHILD BE BULLYING OTHERS?

A child who bullies may exhibit some of the following behaviors:

● Frequent name-calling; for example, describing others as "wimps," "lame," or "losers"	● Spending time with younger or less-powerful kids
● Regular bragging	● A lack of empathy for others
● A constant need to get his or her own way	● A defiant or hostile attitude; easily taking offense

WHAT CAN I DO IF MY CHILD IS BULLIED?

Help your child learn to avoid responding in ways that reward bullying. Explain to your child that people who bully are hoping to get certain reactions. For example, one child might try to bully another by making him feel angry or sad. When the bullied child responds assertively instead ("That's bullying. I want you to stop!"), the child who is bullying may lose interest, and further bullying may be prevented.

Following are some additional ideas for helping your child cope with being bullied:

● Let your child know that he or she has made the right choice by reporting the incident(s) to you, and assure your child that he or she is not to blame.	● Advise your child to report all bullying incidents to an adult at school or a parent.
● Assure your child that he or she is not to blame.	● Help your child be specific in describing bullying incidents: who, what, where, when. (Look for patterns or evidence of repeated bullying.)
● Instruct your child not to fight back. Bullying lasts longer and becomes more severe when children fight back. Physical injuries are often the result.	● Role-play friendship-developing social skills with your child. For example, you could help him or her practice making conversation, joining a group activity, being respectful, and being assertive. Friendships can help buffer a child from the harmful effects of bullying."

For more resources and information, please see cfchildren.org/resources/bullying-prevention-resources/

